



**News from Congressman**

# **Tom Lantos**

**12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California  
San Mateo/San Francisco**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR INFORMATION CALL**  
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## **Lantos Presses for Hearings into Iraqi Prisoner Abuse Scandal Wants to Examine Role of Civilian Contractors, Effect on U.S. Foreign Policy**

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA) today called for hearings in the committees on which he serves to explore some of the causes and effects of the scandal over mistreatment of Iraqi detainees at an Army prison.

“When the work of government goes as far astray as it apparently has in this case, it is clear that the legislative branch needs to exert more authority to provide direction and oversight,” Lantos said. “This affair has damaged our country’s credibility and crippled our efforts to advance peace in the Middle East. To restore our damaged standing in the global community, we need to ensure accountability.”

Lantos, the ranking Democratic member of the House International Relations Committee, has asked Chairman Henry Hyde to hold hearings about how the Geneva Conventions are implemented in Iraq and the impact of the prisoner abuse scandal on U.S. efforts to stabilize Iraq.

In addition, Lantos has joined the 18 other Democratic members on the House Government Reform Committee in a letter to Chairman Tom Davis insisting on a hearing about the role of private contractors in the prison abuse scandal.

“There appears to be a concerted effort by the Republican House leadership not to investigate the Abu Ghraib prison abuses,” the letter to Davis says. “This approach is fundamentally misguided. The Bush Administration has been shielded from serious congressional oversight for far too long. This lack of accountability has been an invitation to abuse. And it has fostered an atmosphere of secrecy and disdain for the principle of open government.”

Lantos has also joined more than 50 members of the House in a letter to the General Accounting Office calling for a non-partisan investigation into the U.S. government’s use of private military firms for security duties in Iraq.

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